

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OIC-02 USIE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07
L-03 ACDA-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7179

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 0505

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO
SUBJECT: MAY NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING

REF: REYKJAVIK 0479

1. AS FOLLOW UP TO REFTTEL, I SHOULD PERHAPS EMPHASIZE
THAT IN INQUIRING ABOUT PRESIDENT'S PLANS FOR ATTENDING
LONDON NAC SESSION, BJARNASON DID NOT RPT NOT MAKE
REQUEST FOR BILATERAL. IN TURN, I DID NOT THINK IT
APPROPRIATE TO SUGGEST BILATERAL TO HIM IN VIEW LIMITED
INFO AVAILABLE TO US RE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE AND UNCERTAINTY
OVER PRIME MINISTER HALLGRIMSSON'S OWN TRAVEL PLANS.

2. I AM CERTAIN, HOWEVER, THAT PRIME MINISTER WOULD
WELCOME BOTH OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH
PRESIDENT AND THE DEMONSTRATION OF INTEREST IN ICELAND AT
HIGHEST LEVEL OF USG THAT MEETING WOULD REPRESENT. BILATERAL
WOULD ALSO REINFORCE LOCAL IMPRESSION THAT VICE-PRESIDENT'S
STOPOVER JANUARY 29 GENUINELY REFLECTED USG'S INTEREST IN
ICELAND AS NATO PARTNER. BILATERAL WOULD ADDITIONALLY ENHANCE
PRIME MINISTER'S STANDING WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY, IN
COALITION, AND IN COUNTRY AS WHOLE AS HE FACES NATIONAL
ELECTIONS DUE NEXT YEAR.

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3. IN TERMS OF SUBSTANCE, PRIME MINISTER WILL BE INTERESTED
IN GENERAL EXCHANGE ON SUCH TOPICS AS NATO, WESTERN
DEFENSE, AND STATUS OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS. FOREMOST IN
HIS MIND, HOWEVER, WILL PROBABLY BE PRESIDENTIAL REACTION
TO HIS REQUEST TO VICE PRESIDENT FOR USG ASSISTANCE IN
CONSTRUCTION OF SEPARATE CIVILIAN AIR TERMINAL AT NATO

BASE WHICH HE BELIEVES IS IN LONG TERM STRATEGIC INTEREST
OF U.S. (REYKJAVIK 473).

4. FOR REASONS MENTIONED PARA TWO, I THEREFORE RECOMMEND
UP TO 30-MINUTE BILATERAL FOR PRIME MINISTER IF
PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE PERMITS AND IF REPEAT IF THERE HAS
NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN NEGATIVE AND IRREVERSIBLE DECISION
REACHED ON PRIME MINISTER'S REQUEST TO VICE PRESIDENT.
IF ANY SUCH DECISION HAD BEEN MADE PRIOR TO LONDON MEETING
IT WOULD SERIOUSLY CLOUD ATMOSPHERE OF BILATERAL AND
LESSEN POTENTIAL GAINS NOTED ABOVE. MOREOVER, IT COULD
PUT PRESIDENT IN POSITION OF PROVIDING RATIONALE FOR
REJECTION OF PRIME MINISTER'S REQUEST TO VICE PRESIDENT.
I BELIEVE IT PREFERABLE ANY SUCH EXPLANATIONS IF THEY HAVE
TO BE MADE BE LEFT TO EMBASSY WHEN TIME CONSTRAINTS
WOULD NOT LIMIT FULL EXPOSITION OF BASIS FOR USG
DECISION.

5. IF BILATERAL IS NOT POSSIBLE, I WOULD STILL HOPE PRIME
MINISTER WOULD HAVE OPPORTUNITY FOR INFORMAL EXCHANGE WITH
PRESIDENT WHICH WOULD PERMIT HIM, JUSTIFIABLY, TO INDICATE
ON HIS RETURN TO ICELAND THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED WITH
PRESIDENT MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.
BLAKE

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